



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Seismic Commission Urges Continued Use of “Duck, Cover and Hold”
Group Concerned With Attempts To Dismiss Proven Earthquake Safety Technique

The Utah Seismic Safety Commission issued a statement Tuesday urging the continued use of the “Duck, Cover and Hold” technique for individuals who are indoors during an earthquake.

The commission’s statement was issued after a recent theory, which attempted to discredit the “Duck, Cover and Hold” technique in favor of a less-proven method, had become widely distributed. Because the alternate theory lacks significant scientific support, the commission is urging schools and other groups to continue using the research-tested “Duck, Cover and Hold” technique.

The commission’s statement reads as follows: “Until advised otherwise by a national safety organization, the commission—based on provisional guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and its own technical judgment—recommends continuation of ‘Duck, Cover and Hold’ as an appropriate earthquake safety measure in Utah.”

“Duck, Cover and Hold” can be used by individuals who are indoors during an earthquake to reduce their chances of injury. The technique is simple: take cover under a desk, table or bench and be sure to hold on. Ground shaking may cause these items to move away if they are not being held. The Utah Seismic Safety Commission was formed in 1994 and consists of the following members:

Barry Welliver, Chair (Structural Engineers Association of Utah)
Rick Allis, Co-Chair (Utah Geological Survey director)
Pete McDonough, Co-Chair (American Society of Civil Engineers)
Walter Arabasz (University of Utah Seismograph Stations director)
Kerry Baum (BYU Emergency Management Director, Association of Contingency Planners representative)
Rep. Don Bush (Utah House of Representatives)
Matt Cassel (American Public Works Association)
Carl Eriksson (former Salt Lake County Building official, Utah League of Cities and Towns representative)
Micheal Keene (Science Advisor to the Governor, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget)
Matthias Mueller (Utah Division of Facilities Construction and Management program director)
Tood Jenson (Utah Department of Transportation Chief Structural Engineer)
Nannette Rolfe (Utah Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security Director)
Barry Smith (representing the Western Mountain Region, American Institute of Architects)
Cathy Howick (Utah Department of Insurance)
Senator Peter Kundson (Utah State Senate)

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